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Consumer Price Index, Alaska area – April 2019

Area prices were up 0.6 percent over the past two months, up 2.7 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Urban Alaska area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), advanced 0.6 percent for the two months ending in April 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (See [table A](#).) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the April increase was influenced by higher prices for gasoline and shelter. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U rose 2.7 percent. (See [chart 1](#) and [table A](#).) Energy prices increased 8.9 percent, largely the result of an increase in the price of electricity. The index for all items less food and energy increased 2.2 percent over the year. (See [table 1](#).)

Food

Food prices declined 0.6 percent for the two months ending in April. (See [table 1](#).) Prices for food at home decreased 1.5 percent, but prices for food away from home rose 0.5 percent for the same period.

Over the year, food prices advanced 2.3 percent. Prices for food away from home increased 3.7 percent since a year ago, and prices for food at home advanced 1.2 percent.

Energy

The energy index advanced 9.5 percent for the two months ending in April. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for gasoline (19.5 percent). Prices for electricity rose 1.0 percent, while prices for natural gas service were unchanged for the same period.

Energy prices increased 8.9 percent over the year, largely due to higher prices for electricity (34.2 percent). Prices paid for gasoline advanced 3.1 percent, but prices for natural gas service decreased 4.2 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy inched down 0.1 percent in the latest two-month period. Lower prices for apparel (-4.9 percent), recreation (-3.8 percent), and new vehicles (-2.1 percent) were partially offset by higher prices for shelter (0.9 percent) and education and communication (0.5 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 2.2 percent. Components contributing to the increase included medical care (10.2 percent), recreation (6.8 percent), and shelter (1.4 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in apparel (-15.5 percent) and education and communication (-0.6 percent).

The June 2019 Consumer Price Index for the Urban Alaska area is scheduled to be released on July 11, 2019.

Consumer Price Index Geographic Revision for 2018

In January 2018, BLS introduced a new geographic area sample for the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This index changed to a bimonthly publication schedule beginning in February, 2018. Additional information on the geographic revision is available at: www.bls.gov/cpi/additional-resources/geographic-revision-2018.htm.

Historical data, including semiannual and annual averages, are available at: www.bls.gov/cpi/data.htm

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the *BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index*, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In

addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.

The Urban Alaska area covered in this release consists of Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the State of Alaska.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Alaska (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2019	Mar. 2019	Apr. 2019	Apr. 2018	Feb. 2019	Mar. 2019
Expenditure category						
All items	227.183	-	228.553	2.7	0.6	-
All items (1967=100)	606.382	-	610.039	-	-	-
Food and beverages	215.043	-	214.123	2.2	-0.4	-
Food	220.923	-	219.565	2.3	-0.6	-
Food at home	215.230	212.894	212.016	1.2	-1.5	-0.4
Cereals and bakery products	232.516	-	223.991	0.9	-3.7	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	193.200	-	195.607	-2.9	1.2	-
Dairy and related products	193.487	-	198.650	-1.4	2.7	-
Fruits and vegetables	344.512	-	325.948	4.6	-5.4	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	152.421	-	150.346	2.1	-1.4	-
Other food at home	179.388	-	178.401	2.8	-0.6	-
Food away from home	228.010	-	229.235	3.7	0.5	-
Alcoholic beverages	156.243	-	159.044	1.3	1.8	-
Housing	206.889	-	208.253	2.7	0.7	-
Shelter	205.454	206.563	207.302	1.4	0.9	0.4
Rent of primary residence(2)	200.239	201.132	201.155	0.5	0.5	0.0
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)	206.553	206.569	206.300	1.1	-0.1	-0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2)	206.553	206.569	206.300	1.1	-0.1	-0.1
Fuels and utilities	359.773	-	361.685	14.5	0.5	-
Household energy	379.411	379.524	381.873	16.2	0.6	0.6
Energy services	423.040	423.040	425.742	16.7	0.6	0.6
Electricity	386.404	386.404	390.372	34.2	1.0	1.0
Utility (piped) gas service	459.057	459.057	459.057	-4.2	0.0	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	130.510	-	128.720	-0.6	-1.4	-
Apparel	156.372	-	148.754	-15.5	-4.9	-
Transportation	224.129	-	232.239	2.9	3.6	-
Private transportation	234.602	-	241.142	1.5	2.8	-
New and used motor vehicles(3)	112.712	-	110.425	0.9	-2.0	-
New vehicles(1)	259.853	-	254.415	5.4	-2.1	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	261.517	-	263.393	0.4	0.7	-
Motor fuel	220.780	222.057	263.283	3.0	19.3	18.6
Gasoline (all types)	221.382	222.721	264.619	3.1	19.5	18.8
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	213.215	214.457	255.575	2.9	19.9	19.2
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	213.310	214.903	253.359	3.0	18.8	17.9
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	226.466	228.059	266.700	4.6	17.8	16.9
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	1,007.596	-	1,007.596	3.2	0.0	-
Medical care	608.275	-	610.641	10.2	0.4	-
Recreation(3)	133.828	-	128.778	6.8	-3.8	-
Education and communication(3)	113.014	-	113.526	-0.6	0.5	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	727.849	-	727.849	3.5	0.0	-
Other goods and services	355.523	-	356.848	2.3	0.4	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	227.183	-	228.553	2.7	0.6	-
Commodities	183.078	-	185.008	0.7	1.1	-
Commodities less food & beverages	166.393	-	169.474	-0.1	1.9	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	207.180	-	217.687	-2.2	5.1	-
Durables	130.004	-	128.715	2.0	-1.0	-
Services	265.173	-	266.030	4.0	0.3	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Alaska (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Feb. 2019	Mar. 2019	Apr. 2019	Apr. 2018	Feb. 2019	Mar. 2019
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	213.831	-	215.156	2.2	0.6	-
All items less shelter.....	236.104	-	237.203	3.3	0.5	-
Commodities less food	166.337	-	169.413	0.0	1.8	-
Nondurables	211.760	-	216.278	0.1	2.1	-
Nondurables less food.....	203.742	-	213.528	-1.9	4.8	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	363.451	-	362.462	6.9	-0.3	-
Services less medical care services.....	245.166	-	245.955	3.4	0.3	-
Energy	286.799	287.637	314.185	8.9	9.5	9.2
All items less energy	224.114	-	223.809	2.2	-0.1	-
All items less food and energy	225.015	-	224.875	2.2	-0.1	-

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a December 1978=100 base.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.